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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted to determine the characteristics of adult non-credit students in Kansas, and the perceived benefits of their learning experiences. A total of 1,179 participants in Kansas non-credit adult learning experiences were identified from four distinct organizational groups representing Kansas adult basic education centers, business management centers, community colleges, and vocational/technical schools. Fifty percent of this sample (596 participants) returned questionnaires. The survey results showed that the majority of the participants were younger married men, while married females constituted the second largest group. Most of the sample population were under 50, while a third were under 25. Most of the learners had graduated from high school, and many had some college education. The primary motivation of those who participated voluntarily in non-credit adult learning experiences was that they wanted to learn more, expand their minds, and develop special skills. Most of the reasons for enrolling were for perceived non-economic benefits as compared to economic benefits. The highest perceived benefit of the learners was "improving interest or skill in learning more," followed by "becoming better informed about some knowledge area or subject." The four groups reported different perceived benefits. The level of satisfaction with the learning experiences increased with the number of learning experiences completed. The questionnaire is appended. (KC)

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THE BENEFITS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNING IN KANSAS

A Survey of Participants in Non-Credit Learning Experiences

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and
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Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS

A Report Submitted to the Education Commission of the States

and

The Kansas Board of Regents

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Charles R. Oaklief
Principal Investigator

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The Benefits and Characteristics of Adult Learning Experiences in Kansas

Introduction

The Kansas adult population, 1,714,000 men and women, are becoming more evident in both the credit and non-credit learning opportunities sponsored by various organizations representing industry, health, government, education, and community interests. In 1975, a survey of Kansas adults revealed that as many as one half of the adult population in Kansas had a serious desire to pursue further education. Approximately two thirds of this group was younger while 15 percent was aged 60 or more (Hoyt, 1975). In a 1977 Regent's study (Board of Regents, State of Kansas, 1977), researchers determined that some 450,000 adult Kansans believed they would "likely" or "for sure" be involved in adult education in the near future. A national sample of adults, (Educational Testing Service, 1971), revealed 77 percent of adult Americans aged 18 to 60 were interested in learning more about some subject or skill. Thirty-one percent of that population was reportedly engaged in some form of adult learning. Interestingly, both studies revealed approximately 33 percent of their samples were currently involved in adult education learning experience. The investment in time, money, and other critical resources in the task of learning continues to represent an increasing aspect of adult education and development in the United States. According to research released by the National Center for Educational Statistics (Kemp, 1978), the enrollment registrations in United States institutions of higher education increased 57 percent between 1967-68 and 1975-76. This general nature of adult interest in learning activities is represented by the over seventeen million adults that were active in organizing learning events during 1975 as reported by the

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 1978). Later reports from the NCES indicated a 55 percent increase in those adults aged 55 and older having participated in organized educational activities (Boaz, 1978). The impact of this research is emphasized due to the fact that educational participation rates by older adults increased at a more rapid rate than for other age groups. Cross (1981) summarized the involvement of older adults in organized learning activities at a rate five times greater than the increase of this age group in the total population.

Adult members of society have exhibited intense interest in educational endeavors in a variety of ways. Part-time participation in all forms of organized learning increased 31 percent in the six years between 1969 and 1975 (Cross, 1981). In reviewing adult learner participation Cross states, "Most adult would-be learners are interested principally in non-credit learning options or in some kind of certificate that would add to their value as employees." Adults constitute the most rapidly growing segment of education in the United States according to Peterson:

> Not only are adults going back to school in even larger numbers, they are also designing independent learning projects and participating in learning activities sponsored by non-school organizations. (Peterson, 1979)

The continuing nature and implications of learning throughout life is evident in the research. Froomkin (1978) suggests that 60 to 70 percent of today's high school graduates will likely be enrolling in some type of post-secondary courses during their lives.

Current enrollment in adult learning, as well as projected growth in an increasing variety of adult development programs, is job related. The most frequent reasons for participating in an adult learning experience that would be considered job related are job obsolescence, increased participation of women in the labor force, increased longevity, job competition, higher

aspirations, social acceptability of career change, and the portability of pension plans. The next most popular learning experiences are those related to recreation and use of leisure time (Cross, 1981).

Research unique to the Kansas adult population and its critical need for the future vitality of this segment of society was reflected by Dr. Gene Kasper, Kansas State Board of Regents, in reference to the statement made by Dr. William Hilton, Director, Education Commission of the States relative to expediting research on . . . "the benefits that accrue to the State (Kansas) and individuals because of participation in lifelong learning opportunities" (Hilton, 1980).

In terms of the need for this research Hilton states:

> It must be recognized that the non-economic benefits of public support for lifelong learning might well be far more important than the economic ones. Among the purposes for such analyses are:
>
> > determining the quality, or worth, of an educational activity, and to use that determination in deciding which activities should receive funding;
> >
> > organizing of self respect as when a campus conducts cost analysis only to justify the indirect rate it charges on federal grants;
> >
> > strengthening the overall efficiency of educational operations by identifying those who produce the desired outcomes at the minimum cost and rewarding them with funding increments at the expense of the least efficient;
> >
> > estimating the budgetary impact of changes in the status quo, as when a campus seeks to determine the likely extent of budget cutbacks and service reductions when enrollments decline, or the reverse, in the case of enrollment increases.

The need for this research project on determining the benefits of participation in adult-continuing education and affects of principles of adult education was highly substantiated in the literature. The need was stated both in terms of building toward a more dynamic theory of adult and

continuing education and in terms of improved level of practice in the provision of learning opportunities for Kansas adults.

Method of Study

The descriptive-survey technique was utilized in obtaining the necessary data for accomplishing the purposes of the research report. The procedure followed was similar to those found in most ex post facto research designs.

The Sample

A total of 1,179 participants in Kansas non-credit adult learning experiences were identified from four distinct organizational groupings representing Kansas adult basic education centers, business management centers, Kansas community colleges and Kansas vocational/technical schools. The response at the time of the return cut off date was 590 or 50 percent of the research population.

Representation of the data relative to organizational groups was provided for by a random selection technique. Appropriate organizational leaders were contracted by letter and telephone assuring their sanction, cooperation, and provision for a list of names and addresses of non-credit adult learning participants. These participants received the questionnaire with assurance of their personal anonymity.

Preparation of the Questionnaire

A questionnaire was utilized to obtain the data which represented distinct areas of inquiry. The criterion were developed to provide measurable data over the individual, societal, non-economic and economic benefits of adult learning experiences of Kansans, and specific conditions for adult

learning. A copy of the questionnaire, as presented to the participants, is found in Appendix A.

Treatment of Data

Data from the four questionnaires were punched into computer cards in a format which permitted analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, et al., 1975). The analysis provided information about the total sample as well as by type of organization and demographic grouping. Also, selected questions were analyzed more thoroughly to permit specific comparisons. In respect to this report, descriptives are used to report the data. Multivariate Analysis of Variance and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation provided for hypothesis testing and the relationship of selected variables.

Kansas Participants in Non-Credit Learning for Adults

The 596 respondents represented a broad section of participants in Kansas non-credit adult learning. The survey population represented 137 participants from adult basic education centers, 140 from business management programs, 125 from vocational/technical schools, and 194 from community college groups.

An overall view of Kansas participants in non-credit learning experiences for adults is represented primarily by younger married males. Most had completed high school; however, for the vast majority, participation in sponsored non-credit adult learning was a new experience. Interestingly, most participated in the learning experience voluntarily in order to learn and to develop special skills rather than to increase social contacts or to improve their financial status. The majority of participants in Kansas

non-credit adult learning experiences were employed full time or not employed at all.

Sex/Marital Status

Information in Table 1 shows the frequency and percent of the sample population's status relative to their sex and marital status. Those adult learners who were married males represented 33.4 percent of the population; married females constituted 26.2 percent; single males, 20.8 percent; and single females, 19.5 percent. Overall, the majority of participants were married males.

Age

Non-credit adult learners responding to the survey were young. Information contained in Table 1 shows that the under 25 group made up 33 percent of the sample population. Over 60 percent were between the ages of 25 and 64. Older Kansans were least prevalent. Those in the 50-64 age category represented only 17.7 percent of the sample population.

Employment

Kansas adult participants in non-credit learning experiences were employed full time in 60 percent of the cases, while those not employed made up 21 percent of the sample population. Data in Table 1 reveals that those employed on an irregular basis made up 5.7 percent and it represented the smallest group of adults participating in non-credit learning programs when classified by level of employment.

Education

The survey group of adult learners ranged from 5.7 percent having a grade 8 or less level of education to 30.7 percent having graduated from high school. Twenty-four percent had completed 1-3 years of college. Over one half, 54.5 percent, of the sample had completed a high school education or

one to three years of college. Considering the adult basic education group as part of the sample, the higher level of education completed by participants is an important question to explore in further studies.

Adult Learning Experiences

In over 50 percent of the cases, Kansas participants in non-credit adult learning were experiencing their first non-credit adult learning experience sponsored by one of the four organizations included in the study. Those experiencing their first, second, or third learning experience represented 87.2 percent of the survey group.

TABLE 1

Demographic Information

Sex/Marital Status	N	%	Age	N	%
Male, single	124	20.8	Under 25	195	32.9
Female, single	116	19.5	25-34	161	27.2
Male, married	199	33.4	35-49	123	20.7
Female, married	156	26.2	50-64	105	17.7
			65 or older	9	1.5
Employment	**N**	**%**	**Education**	**N**	**%**
Employed full time	356	59.8	Grade 8 or less	34	5.7
Employed part time	80	13.4	Grade 9-11	105	17.7
Employed irregular basis	34	5.7	Grade 12	182	30.7
Not employed	125	21.0	1-3 Years College	141	23.8
			Bachelor's Degree	68	11.5
			Post Graduate Study	62	10.5
Adult Learning Experiences	**N**	**%**			
1 (first)	299	52.5			
2 or 3	198	34.7			
4 or 5	37	6.5			
6 or more	36	6.3			

Enrollment Reason

When asked to describe why the research population of Kansas adults participated in non-credit learning experiences, only 78 or 13 percent of the total respondents reported that they were required to participate by their employer. The other 87 percent participated on a volunteer basis for a variety of reasons which is reported in Table 2. It should be noted that respondents were provided the opportunity to check any or all of the reasons for enrollment listed in the questionnaire.

TABLE 2

Enrollment Reason
N=596

Enrollment Reason	Number	Percent
Required by Employer	78	13
Voluntary:		
1. Improve chances for promotion	116	10.66
2. Overcome educational weakness	133	12.22
3. Learn more, expand mind	317	29.14
4. Develop a special skill	257	23.62
5. Improve financial status	111	10.20
6. Increase social contacts	76	6.99

Kansas adults who participated voluntarily in non-credit adult learning experiences did so primarily because they wanted "to learn more, expand their minds," and "develop special skills." The lowest valued benefit, which described their voluntary participation in Kansas adult learning was to "increase social contacts." Those Kansas adults attending on a voluntary basis did not indicate that "improving their financial status" or "improving

their chances for promotion on the job" were as important as "developing subject knowledge," "skills," or "overcoming an educational weakness."

Those reasons for enrollment having a reference to perceived economic benefits received 24.30 percent of the 934 responses for the voluntary enrollment participant. Reasons for non-economic related enrollment represented 75.70 percent of the areas.

In summary, voluntary enrollment rather than mandatory enrollment far exceeded the reasons for participation in non-credit adult learning by Kansas adults in educational activities provided by adult basic education centers, business management centers, vocational/technical schools, and community colleges. Specifically, Kansas volunteer adult learners participated first, to "learn more;" second, "to develop special skills;" third, to overcome an educational weakness; fourth, to improve their chances for a promotion: fifth, to improve their financial status; and sixth, to improve their social contacts.

Adult Learning Experience Benefits

To determine the perceived benefits of participation in non-credit learning experiences by Kansas adults was the primary purpose of this study of learning participants from four organizational groupings. Obviously, each adult learning experience has its own purpose; as a result, different kinds of value or benefits are to be expected for each individual participant. To determine the possible benefits of participation in non-credit adult learning, the research population was asked to indicate (1) whether or not the benefit was something their learning experience was expected to provide and if the learning experience was to provide the benefit (2) to indicate a value judgment on the degree to which they personally benefited.

Economic/Non-Economic Benefits

The benefits are indicated by data reported in Table 3. There were six response items relating to economic benefits (items 14 to 19) and thirteen items relating to non-economic benefits (items 1 to 13). There were four groups of Kansas adults in the learning experiences included in the study. Kansas participants in non-credit adult learning experiences reported an overall perceived benefit of 2.91 which related to the level of a definite benefit on the perceived value scale for possible benefits. An overall mean value of 2.91 represented the thirteen possible items relating to non-economic benefits. The economic related variables, representing six possible benefit items, had a mean score value of 2.90. Accordingly, respondents to this study did not place more value on non-economic than on economic benefits as represented by data in Table 3. Although mean score comparisons without the use of confidence intervals or further statistical testing to determine actual variances between group means is desirable, the arithmetical averages of learning experience benefits do lead to helpful analysis of the data.

"Improving my interest and/or skill in learning more," was valued the highest of 19 possible benefit items rated by respondents (mean score of 3.9). "Becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge" was the second highest ranking value expected to be provided by the learning experience from which the study participants benefited. These results are strongly supported by findings reported in Table 2 on voluntary participation. The most frequent responses for voluntary participants in non-credit adult learning were to "learn more, expand the mind," and "develop a special skill." The third possible benefit related to "preparing for increased responsibilities on the job." This was the only economically related benefit

Table 3

Value of Benefits

Possible Benefits	Degree of Benefit/Population Area: Community College $\bar{x}$	Community College Rank	Voc. Tec. Schools $\bar{x}$	Voc. Tec. Schools Rank	Adult Lrn. Centers $\bar{x}$	Adult Lrn. Centers Rank	Bus. Ind. $\bar{x}$	Bus. Ind. Rank	Overall Mean	Overall Rank
1. Improve Skill/Reading Writing, Speaking	2.710	16	2.559	14	3.010	7	2.333	18	2.765	16
2. Lrn. Effective Consumer	2.863	7	2.526	16	2.551	19	2.644	16	2.645	19
3. Lrn. Effective Parent	2.654	18	2.556	15	2.884	13	2.786	14	2.772	15
4. Lrn. Effective Politics/Govt.	3.000	1	2.333	17	2.784	16	2.462	17	2.682	12
5. Lrn. Subject/Knowledge	2.955	3	3.068	1	2.960	9	3.206	1	3.046	2
6. Improve Interest/ Skill in Learning	2.836	10	2.885	6	3.117	2	2.991	5	3.942	1
7. Dev. Self Reliance/ Independence	2.845	8	2.923	4	3.056	6	2.826	11	2.917	7
8. Dev. Positive feelings/worth	2.727	15	2.838	9	3.185	1	2.959	7	2.942	5
9. Dev. Tolerance/ Respectful of Others	2.729	14	2.544	15	2.847	14	2.871	10	2.752	17
10. Dev. Principles/ Beliefs	2.842	9	2.667	13	3.074	5	2.878	9	2.887	9
11. Dev. Skill in Hobbies	2.935	4	2.717	12	2.679	18	2.688	15	2.800	14
12. Increase Appreciation of Art/Culture	2.872	6	2.333	17	2.781	17	1.750	19	2.719	18
13. Gain from Self-Improvement	2.914	5	2.846	8	3.093	3	3.010	4	2.959	4
14. Qualify-Entry-Position	2.583	19	2.897	5	2.985	8	2.937	8	2.901	8
15. Prepare-Increased Responsibilities/ Job	2.983	2	2.974	2	3.079	4	3.068	3	3.034	3
16. Increase Job Earnings/ Qualifications	2.756	12	2.959	3	2.958	10	2.790	13	2.871	10
17. Lrn. Recent Job Knowledge	2.754	13	2.813	10	2.846	15	3.141	2	2.935	6
18. Qualifying for New Job	2.763	11	2.857	7	2.888	11	2.800	12	2.838	13
19. Gain new Qualifications	2.667	17	2.778	11	2.887	12	2.982	6	2.846	11

in the top five for the 19 benefit items. The emphasis placed on non-economic benefits of non-credit learning experiences by Kansas adults is very evident.

The second highest ranking of perceived values overall for benefits included: "learning recent job knowledge," "developing self reliance and independence," "becoming qualified for an entry-level position," "developing a personal set of principles and beliefs," and "increasing job earnings and qualifications." These items reflect a definite grouping relative to the value of economic benefits associated with non-credit adult education activities in Kansas. These items reflect a definite grouping related to the value of economic benefits associated with non-credit adult education activities in Kansas.

The third highest ranking of perceived values overall included: "gaining qualifications for wider job responsibilities," "improving effectiveness in politics and business," "qualifying for a new and different job," "developing skills and interests in hobbies," and "learning how to become a more effective parent." These items appear to reflect strong emphasis on adult coping skills as well as occupationally related needs.

The fourth highest ranking of values included "improvement of skill in reading, writing, or speaking," "developing tolerance and respect for others," "increasing appreciation of art and cultural activities," and "learning consumer skills." These items reflect value judgments in the personal skills area which relate to the non-economic benefits of non-credit learning activities.

Differences In Benefit Value Between Organizational Groups

Information contained in data reported in Table 3 provides a method of scrutinizing differences among the four organizational groups involved in

the study. What are the differences in the perception of benefits received from the learning experience among the four participant groups which include Kansas adult basic education centers, business management centers, vocational/technical schools, and community colleges? Those survey respondents from adult basic education centers placed their highest benefit values on "developing positive feelings about self and worth as a person," "improving interest/skill in learning," "gaining self improvement," "preparing for increased job responsibilities," and "development of principles and beliefs." "Learning consumer skills," "developing avocational interests," "appreciation of art/culture," and "effectiveness in politics and government" were reported as lower values.

Those respondents from business management centers placed their highest benefit values on "learning a subject or knowledge," "learning recent job knowledge," "preparing for increased job responsibilities," "self improvement," and "improving interest/skill in learning." "Appreciation of art/culture," "improving reading, writing, speaking skills," "developing effectiveness in politics/government," "consumer skills," and "political/government skills" were among the lower valued items reported by this group.

The vocational/technical program respondents placed their highest benefit values on "learning a subject," "preparing for increased responsibilities on the job," "increasing job earning/qualifications," "developing self-reliance/independence," and "qualifying for a job entry position." "Appreciation of art/culture," "effectiveness in politics/ government," "effectiveness as consumer," and "effective parenting" were among the lower valued benefits reported by the vocational/technical group.

Community college program respondents placed their highest benefit values on "learning to be effective in politics and government," "preparing

for increased job responsibilities," "learning a subject/knowledge," "developing skill in hobbies," and "gaining self improvement." "Qualifying for a job entry position," "learning effective parenting," "gaining new qualifications," and "improving skill in reading, writing, and thinking" were among the lower valued benefits reported by the community college groups.

Perceived Satisfaction of Learning Experiences

Historically, adult education program leaders have included a survey of the overall satisfaction of their learning experiences. This study is no exception. Over fifty percent of the Kansas respondents were "quite satisfied" with their non-credit learning experience as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceived Satisfaction of Learning Experience
N=572

Level of Satisfaction	N	%
Not Satisfied	15	2.6
Slightly Satisfied	26	4.5
Moderately Satisfied	127	22.2
Quite Satisfied	293	51.2
Very Satisfied	111	19.4

Only 2.6 percent indicated that they were "not satisfied," while 4.5 percent said they were "slightly satisfied." Since one of the most effective program promotional techniques in adult/continuing education is the recommendation of satisfied customers (Cross, 1981; Knowles, 1980), the data suggestions in Table 4 are very positive.

Perceived Strength and Weakness of Adult Learning Experiences

Seven features of adult learning experiences were developed and responded to for determining overall strengths or weaknesses of the learning experience. The feature consisting of "homework, assignments, and projects" was rated first; "the ability of the teacher to explain or demonstrate" was second; and "teacher expertise" was third, as reported in Table 5. Those features, ranking lower included, "having enough time for learning" and "the availability of individual help." There were no features valued lower than three out of a possible four on the strength/weakness scale. All features were reported to be more a strength than a weakness.

Table 5

Perceived Strength/Weakness of Adult Learning Experiences

	Strengths and Weaknesses		
Features	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Expertise of Leaders/ Teachers	3.645	0.775	3
Abilty to Explain/ Demonstrate	3.657	0.686	2
Equipment	3.555	1.009	5
Learning Materials	3.587	0.823	4
Time for Learning	3.180	0.987	7
Availability of Ind. Help	3.420	0.911	6
Homework	3.875	1.125	1

Opportunity to Participate In Adult Learning Experiences

Learner participation is a major factor in successful adult education as reported by many researchers (Knowles, 1980; Knox, 1977). Table 6 reports data relative to the opportunity for participation in the learning experience over the three areas which include participating in the development of goals and ideas for learning, sharing personal experiences, and contributing to the evaluation of the learning experience.

Participants reported a slightly higher level of involvement in "developing goals and ideas" for the learning experience than "contributing to the evaluation" or "sharing their own experiences so that others could learn from these." All opportunities to participate received a rating of 3 out of a possible 4.

Table 6

Opportunity to Participate in Adult Learning Experience

Opportunity Area	Opportunity for Participation		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Developing goals and ideas for the learning experience	2.964	1.034	1
Share their own experiences	2.901	.982	3
Contribute to the process by which the learning experience was evaluated	2.928	1.357	2

Contribution Toward Cost of Learning Experience

The contribution toward cost of the learning experience provided the data reported in Table 7. Approximately 40 percent reported having "no financial contribution" relative to the non-credit learning experience. The

next largest group perceived their contribution at "100 percent" of the cost. The remaining responses represented a small range with even distributions. It appears that it is an all or none situation for Kansas adults from the population groups when it comes to personal funding of their learning experiences.

Table 7

Contribution Toward Cost of Learning Experience

Percent of Contribution	Frequency	Percent	Rank
None	223	39.7	1
1-24%	64	11.4	3
25-49%	25	4.4	6
50-74%	54	9.6	5
75-99%	57	10.1	4
100%	139	24.1	2

Type of Recognition

Information contained in the data reported in Table 8 indicates that participants in Kansas non-credit learning sponsored by one of the four organizational groups received recognition or reward for attending by the presentation of a "certificate." The next most common practice was to receive "no recognition" for the experience. The third most popular recognition area was the "Continuing Education Unit," followed by "increased salary and promotion."

Table 8

Type of Recognition
N = 525

Type of Recognition	Frequency	Percent	Rank
No Special Recognition or Reward	154	25.8	2
CEU Credit	36	6.0	3
Increased Salary Aspect	34	5.7	4
A Certificate	296	49.7	1
Promotional Related Aspect	5	0.8	5

Length of Learning Experience

The survey respondents were asked to identify the total length of their learning experience in hours. This data is reported in Table 9. Approximately 24 percent indicated a length of "1-9 hours" for their learning experiences. The second most popular time length was "50 or more hours" of learning experience as indicated by 20.8 percent of the respondents. The remaining categories were closely distributed.

Table 9

Length of Learning Experiences
N = 557

Length of Learning Experience	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1-9 hours	139	23.2	1
10-19 hours	90	15.1	4
20-29 hours	81	13.6	5
30-39 hours	91	15.3	3
40-49 hours	32	5.4	6
50 hours or more	124	20.8	2

Perceived Benefits and Selected Factors
Having Significant Differences for Kansas Adult Learners

A total of 10 out of the 19 perceived benefits of the participant's learning experience indicated a significant difference among the selected factors consisting of sex and marital status, age, employment, education, number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years, recognition received upon completion, perceived satisfaction, percent of cost assumed by participant, length of the learning experience, and organizational group. The benefits were rated on a 4 point scale.

A listing of all benefits having a significant difference is as follows:

(1) Perceived Benefit: Improving skill in reading, writing, or speaking.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=8$, d.f.=3/196, $p \leq .0000$) among three of the organizational groups with group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.01$) scoring higher than group 2 (business, $\bar{x}=2.333$) and group 3 (vocational/technical, $\bar{x}=2.559$).

(2) Perceived Benefit: Learning how to be an effective consumer.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=3.455$, d.f.=3/188, $p \leq .0176$) among three of the groups for number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 4 (6 or more experiences, $\bar{x}=3.4$) scored higher than group 1 (first learning experience, $\bar{x}=2.6$) and group 2 (2 or 3 experiences, $\bar{x}=2.613$).

(3) Perceived Benefit: Becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=3.052$, d.f.=3/474, $p \leq .0283$) between two of the groups for number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 1 (this was the first, $\bar{x}=3.013$) scored lower than group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}=3.4$).

(b) There was a significant difference ($F=5.964$, d.f.=4/444, $p \leq .0001$) between two of the grouping for recognition received upon completion of the learning experience. Group 1 (no special recognition, $\bar{x}=2.772$) scored lower than group 4 (a certificate, $\bar{x}=3.131$).

(c) There was a significant difference ($F=3.448$, d.f.=3/497, $p \leq .0166$) between two of the organizational groups. Group 2 (business, $\bar{x}=3.206$) perceived this benefit higher than group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=2.955$).

(4) Perceived Benefit: Improving my interest and/or skill in learning more.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=3.134$, d.f.=3/446, $p \leq .0254$) between organizational groups with group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.117$) scoring higher than group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=2.836$).

(5) Perceived Benefit: Developing positive feelings about myself and my worth as a person.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=4.834$, d.f.=3/306, $p \leq .0027$) between organizational groups. Group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.185$) scored higher than group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=2.727$).

(6) Perceived Benefit: Gaining satisfaction from being involved in self-improvement.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=3.86$, d.f.=3/369, $p \leq .0097$) among three of the groups on number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}=3.458$) scored higher than group 1 (this was the first, $\bar{x}=2.957$) and group 2 (2 or 3, $\bar{x}=2.887$).

(7) Perceived Benefit: Preparing to handle increased responsibilities which will make my job more important.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=5.205$, d.f.=3/308, $p \leq .0016$) among three of the groups on number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}=3.619$) scored higher than group 2 (2 or 3, $\bar{x}=2.946$).

(8) Perceived Benefit: Learning about recent knowledge affecting my work.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=4.275$, d.f.=3/305, $p \leq .0056$) among three of the employment groups. Group 1 (full time, $\bar{x}=3.028$) and group 2 (part time, $\bar{x}=2.9$) scored higher than group 4 (not employed, $\bar{x}=2.579$).

(b) There was a significant difference (F=4.473, d.f.=3/305, $p \leq .0043$) between two of the organizational groupings. Group 2 (business, $\bar{x}$=3.141) scored higher than group 4 (community colleges, $\bar{x}$=2.754).

(9) Perceived Benefit: Becoming qualified for a new and different job.

(a) There was a significant difference (F=3.910, d.f.=3/239, $p \leq .0094$) between the groups on number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}$=3.286) scored higher than group 3 (4 or 5, $\bar{x}$=2.286).

(10) Perceived Benefit: Gaining qualifications which enable me to assume a wider variety of responsibilities.

(a) There was a significant difference (F=3.032, d.f.= 3/328 $p \leq .0295$) between two of the sex and marital status groups. Group 3 (married males, $\bar{x}$=2.992) scored higher than group 4 (married females, $\bar{x}$=2.645).

(b) There was a significant difference (F=4.355, d.f.-3/312, $p \leq .0050$) for two groups on number of adult learning experiences completed in the past two years. Group 3 (4 or more, $\bar{x}$=2.727) scored lower than group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}$=3.333).

(11) Perceived Benefit: Overall benefit for all nineteen.

(a) There was a significant difference (F=4.297, d.f.=3/566, $p \leq .0052$) between the groups for number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years. Group 4 (6 or more, $\bar{x}$=3.03) scored higher than group 1 (this was the first, $\bar{x}$=2.539).

The above item (number 11) was an overall rating of the 19 perceived benefits for the participant's learning experience. There was a significant

difference between this value and the number of adult learning experiences completed in the past two years.

Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses and Selected Factors Having Significant Differences for Kansas Adult Learners

There was at least one significant difference for each of the seven strength ratings. These strengths were tested with groupings on sex and marital status, age, employment, education, number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years, recognition received upon successful completion, perceived satisfaction, percent of cost assumed by participant, length of the learning experience, and organizational groups. Respondents rated each of the seven strengths on a four point scale.

The one-way analysis of variance also indicated a significant difference for the overall ratings on strength of the learning experience and organizational group of the respondent.

A listing of the significant differences follows:

(1) Strength: The knowledge or professional expertise of the leader(s) or teacher(s).

(a) There were significant differences ($F=11.858$, d.f.=3/531, $p \leq .0000$) among three of the employment groups. Group 4 (not employed, $\bar{x}=3.206$) scored lower than group 2 (part time, $\bar{x}=3.725$) and group 3 (irregular employment, $\bar{x}=3.781$).

(b) There was a significant difference ($F=3.881$, d.f.=3/531, $p \leq .0052$) between two of the organizational groupings. Group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.392$) scored lower than group 2 (business, $\bar{x}=3.674$).

(2) Strength: The ability of the leader(s) or teacher(s) to explain or demonstrate.

(a) There were significant differences (F=5.838, d.f.=3/536, $p \leq .0006$) among three of the employment groups. Group 4 (not employed, $\bar{x}$=3.374) scored lower than group 1 (full time, $\bar{x}$=3.649) and group 2 (part time, $\bar{x}$=3.690).

(3) Strength: The equipment.

(a) There were significant differences (F=4.568, d.f.=3/445, $p \leq .0036$) among the organizational groupings. Group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}$=2.989) scored lower than group 2 (business, $\bar{x}$=3.345) and group 3 (vocational/technical, $\bar{x}$=3.358).

(4) Strength: The learning materials supplied.

(a) There was a significant difference (F=3, d.f.=5/481, $p \leq .0112$) between two of the groups on cost of the learning experience assumed by the participant. Group 1 (none, $\bar{x}$=3.534) scored higher than group 6 (100%, $\bar{x}$=3.234).

(b) There was a significant difference (F=3.565, d.f.=4/455, $p \leq .0071$) between two of the groups on recognition received from successful completion of the learning experience. Group 1 (no special recognition, $\bar{x}$=3.235) scored lower than group 4 (a certificate, $\bar{x}$=3.528).

(c) There was a significant difference (F=4.290, d.f.=3/502, $p \leq .0046$) between two of the organizational groupings. Group 2 (business, $\bar{x}$=3.61) scored higher than group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}$=3.307).

(5) Strength: Having enough time to learn.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=3.258$, d.f.= 5/486, $p \leq .0066$) between two groups on length of the learning experience. Group 1 (1-9 hours, $\bar{x}=2.808$) scored lower than group 6 (50 or more hours, $\bar{x}=3.244$).

(b) There were significant differences ($F=5.166$, d.f.=3/509, $p \leq .0016$) among three of the organizational groupings. Group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.33$) scored higher than group 2 (business, $\bar{x}=2.939$) and group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=2.933$).

(6) Strength: Availability of individual help.

(a) There were significant differences ($F=6.179$, d.f.=3/499, $p \leq .0004$) among all four of the organizational groups. Group 1 (adult basic education, $\bar{x}=3.534$) scored higher than group 2 (business , $\bar{x}=3.176$) group 3 (vocational/technical, $\bar{x}=3.110$), and group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=3.242$).

(7) Strength: Homework assignments, projects.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=3.177$, d.f.=5/297, $p \leq .0083$) between two groups concerning hours of class instruction. Group 1 (1-9 hours, $\bar{x}=2.761$) scored lower than group 5 (40-49 hours, $\bar{x}=3.529$).

(8) Strength: Overall

(a) There were significant differences ($F=6.848$, d.f.=3/525, $p \leq .0002$) among the organizational groups. Group 4 (community college, $\bar{x}=3.695$) scored higher than group 2 (business, $\bar{x}=3.516$) and group 3 (vocational/technical, $\bar{x}=3.431$).

Perceived Satisfaction and Selected Factors Having Significant Differences for Kansas Adult Learners

Survey participant's satisfaction differed significantly on two of the seven strengths. The significant areas were the type of recognition received and the total length of the learning experience.

Results of the significant differences are as follows:

(1) Satisfaction of learning experience.

(a) There was a significant difference ($F=8.877$, d.f.=4/508, $p \leq .0000$) between two group on the amount of recognition received upon completion of the learning experience. Group 1 (no special recognition, $\bar{x}=3.438$) scored lower than group 4 (a certificate, $\bar{x}=3.938$).

(b) There was a significant difference ($F=3.402$, d.f.=5/538, $p \leq .0049$) between two of the groups concerning hours of instruction. Group 1 (1-9 hours, $\bar{x}=3.544$) scored lower than group 2 (10-19 hours, $\bar{x}=3.055$).

Contingencies of Perceived Benefits of Kansas Non-Credit Adult Learning Experiences and Selected Factors

The perceived relevance of each of the nineteen benefits was contingent upon the sex and marital status, age, employment, education, and number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years by the individual.

In the following contingency table, checks indicate significant Chi Square (χ^2) values.

Table 10

Contingencies of Perceived Benefits of Kansas Non-Credit Adult Learning Experiences on Selected Factors

Benefits	Selected Factors: Sex and Marital Status	Age	Employment	Education	Adult Learning Experience (# taken in last 2 years)
1. Improving skill in reading, writing, or speaking	X	X	X	X	
2. Learning how to be a more effective consumer				X	
3. Learning how to be a more effective parent				X	
4. Learning how to be a more effective participant in politics or government	X			X	
5. Becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge	X	X	X	X	X
6. Improving my interest and/or skill in learning more					
7. Developing a sense of self-reliance or independence	X	X		X	
8. Developing positive feelings about myself and my worth as a person	X	X		X	
9. Becoming more tolerant and respectful of others, even if they differ from me in their opinions or conduct	X	X		X	
10. Developing a personal set of principles and beliefs that determine what is right and wrong for me	X	X	X	X	
11. Developing skills and/or interests in hobbies or other free-time activities	X	X	X		X
12. Increasing appreciation of artistic or cultural expressions (art, music, drama, dance, poetry, etc.)	X	X	X	X	
13. Gaining satisfaction from being involved in self-improvement	X	X			X
14. Becoming qualified for an entry-level position	X	X		X	
15. Preparing to handle increased responsibilities which will make my job more important	X	X	X		
16. Increasing my job earnings by improving my qualifications	X	X		X	
17. Learning about recent knowledge affecting my work	X		X		X
18. Becoming qualified for a new and different job	X	X		X	
19. Gaining qualifications which enable me to assume a wider varity of responsibilities	X	X	X		

In response to possible benefits of non-credit adult learning experiences, Chi-Square contingencies are more prevalent for sex and marital status, age, and education, than for adult learning experiences, and degree of employment. Contingency information based on data from Table 10 shows that sex and marital status has the highest association with the total possible benefits of participation in Kansas non-credit adult learning experiences; age and education were second, employment third, and number of adult learning experiences last.

Economic benefits were more related to sex/marital and age factors while non-economic related benefits related more heavily on the education factor. In terms of the total list of benefits, only "becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge" related on all of the factors. The factors "Improving skill in reading, writing, or speaking" and "increasing appreciation of artistic or cultural expressions" associated with all factors except number of adult learning experiences.

Interestingly, the benefit "improving my interest and/or skill in learning more did not associate with any one of the factors.

Summary and Implications of Findings for State Planning and Policy Development Purposes

The data reported in this study of perceived benefits and characteristics of non-credit adult learning in Kansas contains information which, if applied appropriately, can have a supportive influence on state planning activities as well as policy development processes.

Information derived from the data should have value both in terms of short range and long range applications. In addition to implications for state policy and program planning, the information may find useful application at the organizational, administrative, or supervisory level of human resource functions and in the development and conduct of programs at the practitioner level.

Each of the questionnaire areas was compared statistically to determine the degree of differences which existed in the survey data. For purposes of this report, only those comparisons which resulted in a significant difference were reported.

Adult basic education participants perceived the benefits of (1) improving skills in reading, writing, and speaking, (2) improving interest and/or skill in learning more, and (3) developing positive feelings and worth as a person.

The strengths of the learning experience perceived by adult basic education participants were (1) enough time to learn, and (2) availability of individual help.

Business managers perceived the benefits of their learning experience as (1) becoming better informed about a subject or area of knowledge and (2) learning about recent knowledge affecting my work. A strength perceived as important by business participants was (1) knowledge and professional expertise of the leader and the learning materials.

Participants in vocational/technical learning experiences perceived "equipment" to be a strength of their learning experiences. There were no significant differences for vocational/technical participants on perceived benefits.

Community college program participants perceived the overall strength of their learning experience significantly higher than the business and vocational/technical groups.

The number of adult learning experiences completed in the last two years affected benefit ratings. Those completing six or more learning experiences valued the following benefits: (1) learning how to be a more effective parent, (2) becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge, (3) gaining satisfaction from being involved in self-improvement, (4) preparing to handle increased responsibilities, (5) becoming qualified for a new and different job, (6) and gaining qualifications which enabled them to assume a wider variety of responsibilities.

Those participants receiving a certificate as recognition for successful completion of their learning experiences were significantly higher in their satisfaction of the learning experiences than those who receive no recognition. Participants receiving certificates perceived the benefit of "becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge" significantly higher than those with no recognition. The recognition group receiving certificates placed significant value on "the learning materials supplied."

Those participants completing 1 to 9 hours of instruction differed significantly from the 50 or more hour group on "having enough time to learn;" they differed from the 40-49 hour group on "homework assignments and projects;" and they differed from the 10-19 hour group on overall satisfaction of the learning experience.

The unemployed group perceived "learning about recent knowledge affecting their work" lower than both the full-time and part-time employment groups. Those unemployed also perceived the "knowledge or professional expertise of the leader or teacher" lower than the part-time and irregular employed groups.

Married male participants were significantly higher in their value on the benefit of "gaining qualifications which enabled them to assume a wider variety of responsibilities."

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Appendix A

Learning Experience _____

SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS IN NON-CREDIT
LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ADULTS

State of Kansas
Board of Regents Office

You recently participated in the learning experience identified at the top of this form. This survey seeks to determine the ways in which that experience benefited or did not benefit you. It is part of a nationwide study of adult learning. By providing your honest reactions, you will help us to develop recommendations which will improve the quality and type of learning opportunities for adults.

To encourage frankness, we are not asking you to identify yourself. Your willingness to give your considered opinion on the questions we ask will be appreciated. Only 10-15 minutes are required.

I. Identification (check the one answer to each question which best describes you)

A. Sex/Marital Status

____ Male, single (includes divorced and widowed)
____ Female, single (includes divorced and widowed)
____ Male, married
____ Female, married

B. Age

____ Under 25 years old
____ 25-34
____ 35-49
____ 50-64
____ 65 or older

C. Employment

____ Employed full time
____ Employed part time
____ Employed on an irregular basis
____ Not employed

D. Education (last grade completed)

____ Grade 8 or less
____ Grade 9-11
____ Grade 12 (H.S. graduate)
____ 1-3 years of college
____ Bachelor's degree, college
____ Post graduate study (graduate school or professional school)

E. Adult Learning Experiences

During the past two years, in how many "adult learning experiences" similar to the one identified on the top of this form, have you participated?

____ 1 (This was the first)
____ 2 or 3
____ 4 or 5
____ 6 or more

F. Enrollment Reason

Check the statement which best describes why you participated in this experience.

____ It was required by my employer

I participated voluntarily because: (check all that apply)

____ I wanted to improve my chances for promotion
____ I wanted to overcome an educational weakness
____ I wanted to learn more, expand my mind
____ I wanted to develop a special skill
____ I wanted to improve my financial status
____ I wanted to increase my social contacts (meet new people, etc.)
Others (specify) _____

II. Benefits

Each adult learning experience has its own purposes; as a result, different experiences have different kinds of value or benefit to the participant. In this section, a number of possible benefits are described. For each, please check in Column 1, (Relevance) whether or not the benefit was something your learning experience was expected to provide.

Then, for those benefits for which you checked "yes" in Column 1, use Column 2 to indicate your judgment of the degree to which you were personally benefited. To do this, circle the appropriate letter.

N means that you experienced little or no benefit
S means that you experienced some benefit, but not a great deal
D means that you experienced definite benefit
G means that you experienced great benefit

Possible Benefits	Column 1 Relevance		Column 2 - Value (To be answered if "yes" was checked in Column 1)			
	Yes	No				
1. Improving skill in reading, writing, or speakng	___	___	N	S	D	G
2. Learning how to be a more effective consumer	___	___	N	S	D	G
3. Learning how to be a more effective parent	___	___	N	S	D	G
4. Learning how to be a more effective participant in politics or government	___	___	N	S	D	G
5. Becoming better informed about some subject or area of knowledge	___	___	N	S	D	G
6. Improving my interest and/or skill in learning more	___	___	N	S	D	G
7. Developing a sense of self-reliance or independence	___	___	N	S	D	G
8. Developing positive feelings about myself and my worth as a person	___	___	N	S	D	G
9. Becoming more tolerant and respectful of others, even if they differ from me in their opinions or conduct	___	___	N	S	D	G
10. Developing a personal set of principles and beliefs that determine what is right and wrong for me	___	___	N	S	D	G
11. Developing skills and/or interests in hobbies or other free time activities	___	___	N	S	D	G
12. Increasing appreciation of artistic or cultural expressions (art, music, drama, dance, poetry, etc.)	___	___	N	S	D	G
13. Gaining satisfaction from being involved in self-improvement	___	___	N	S	D	G
14. Becoming qualified for an entry-level position	___	___	N	S	D	G
15. Preparing to handle increased responsibilities which will make my job more important	___	___	N	S	D	G
16. Increasing my job earnings by improving my qualifications	___	___	N	S	D	G
17. Learning about recent knowledge affecting my work	___	___	N	S	D	G
18. Becoming qualified for a new and different job	___	___	N	S	D	G
19. Gaining qualifications which enable me to assume a wider variety of responsibilities	___	___	N	S	D	G
20. Other (specify) _____ _____ _____	___	___	N	S	D	G

III. The Learning Experience

A. Overall, how satisfied were you with the learning experience?

____ Not at all; I was quite disappointed
____ Slightly; I am not enthusiastic
____ Moderately; it was worthwhile
____ Quite satisfied; I would encourage others to particiate
____ Very satisfied; it was one of the best things that has happened to me this year

B. Please rate the degree to which each of the following features of the learning experience was a "strength" or "weakness" by circling the appropriate letters.

DW means "Definite weakness"
W means "More a weakness than a strength"
S means "More a strength than an weakness"
DS means "Definite strength"
NR means "Not relevant; does not apply"

Features

1. The knowledge or professional expertise of leader(s) or teacher(s)	DW	W	S	DS	NR
2. The ability of the leader(s) or teacher(s) to explain or demonstrate	DW	W	S	DS	NR
3. The equipment	DW	W	S	DS	NR
4. The learning materials supplied (books, pamphlets, practice materials)	DW	W	S	DS	NR
5. Having enough time to learn	DW	W	S	DS	NR
6. Availability of individual help	DW	W	S	DS	NR
7. "Homework" assignments, projects	DW	W	S	DS	NR

C. Indicate to what extent you were given an opportunity to participate in the learning experience by circling the appropriate letters.

LD means "Large degree"
MD means "Moderate degree"
SD means "Small degree"
ND means "Not at all"

To what extent were the participants given an opportunity to:

1) Participate in developing the goals and ideas for the learning experience?	LD	MD	SD	ND
2) Share their own experiences so that others could learn from these?	LD	MD	SD	ND
3) Contribute to the process by which the learning experience was evaluated?	LD	MD	SD	ND

D. Indicate the approximate percent you contributed toward the cost of the learning experience.

____ None
____ 1-24%
____ 25-49%
____ 50-74%
____ 75-99%
____ 100%

E. Indicate the type of recognition or reward you received from attending the learning experience.

____ No special recognition or reward
____ CEU credit
____ Increased salary aspect
____ A certificate
____ Promotional related aspect
Other (specify) _____

F. Indicate the total length of the learning experience in hours.

____ 1-9
____ 10-19
____ 20-29
____ 30-39
____ 40-49
____ 50 or more

G. Please describe briefly

1. The most important things you got out of the learning experience: _____
_____
_____

2. The best thing about the experience: _____
_____
_____

3. The worst thing about the experience: _____
_____
_____

Thank you for your assistance. Please return the completed survey in the enclosed self-addressed, postage free envelope.